

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 4, 10, 23-24, 26-27 and 29-33 previously presented for examination remain in the application. Claims 25 and 28 have been canceled without prejudice and their limitations incorporated into claims 3 and 10, respectively. Claims 3, 10 and 29 have been amended to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicant regards as the invention and to expedite allowance.

Claims 25 and 28 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Base claims 3 and 10 have been amended to include the limitations of claims 25 and 28, respectively, and thus, should be in condition for allowance. The limitations of claims 25 and 28 have also been incorporated into base claim 29. Applicant also respectfully submits that claim 29 is now also in condition for allowance for similar reasons.

Claims 3, 10 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being considered to be anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,075,240 to Watanabe et al. ("Watanabe").

Claims 3, 10 and 29 further stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being considered to be anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,320,174 to Tafas et al.

Claims 3, 4, 10, 29, 32 and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being considered to be anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0096629 to Korein.

Claims 23, 24, 26, 27, 30 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over Tafas et al.

For the reasons discussed above, applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 10 and 29 are in condition for allowance and the applicable rejections have been rendered moot. Claims 4, 23 and 24, claims 26 and 27 and claims 30-33 depend from and further limit claims 3, 10 and 29, respectively. Thus, the applicable rejections for claims 4, 23-24, 26-27, and 30-33 have also been rendered moot and claims 4, 23-24, 26-27 and 30-33 should also be found to be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons.

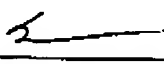
Based on the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that the relevant objections and rejections have been overcome and claims 3, 4, 10, 23-24, 26-27 and 29-33 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner disagrees or believes that further discussion will expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone applicant's representative Cynthia Thomas Faatz at (408) 765-2057.

If there are any charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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